

WE CLAIM:

1. A method of locating a roving character in a theme park environment, comprising:
 - providing a roving character with a wireless transmitter;
 - providing a user with a toy including a wireless receiver;
 - periodically transmitting a signal from the wireless transmitter, the signal identifying the walking character;
 - receiving the signal at the wireless receiver; and
 - notifying the user that the walking character is nearby.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the signal is an infrared signal.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein the signal is a radio frequency signal.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein the signal comprises a code relating to the identity of the roving character.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein the toy further comprises a memory and stores the received wireless signal in the memory.
6. A method of locating a roving character in a theme park environment, comprising:
 - providing a plurality of wireless signal transmitters at various locations throughout a theme park environment;
 - providing a roving character with a wireless signal receiver and a wireless signal transmitter;
 - providing a user with a toy comprising a wireless signal receiver;
 - periodically transmitting wireless signals indicative of location from the plurality of infrared signal transmitters;
 - receiving at least one wireless signal indicative of location at the wireless signal receiver of the roving character;

transmitting a wireless signal from the roving character, the wireless signal comprising the identity and location of the roving character;

receiving the wireless signal sent from the roving character at the wireless receiver of the toy; and

notifying the user of the location of the walking character.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein the wireless signal is an infrared signal.

8. The method of claim 6 wherein the wireless signal is a radio frequency signal.

9. An interactive character system comprising:

one or more toys, each toy having one or more wireless electronic signal receivers structured to receive an wireless signal, and an electronic system, said electronic system having a programmable memory structured to store software and preprogrammed data, said software structured to interpret a received electronic signal and to trigger playback of preprogrammed data related the received electronic signal; and

an environment having disposed therein one or more roving characters, each roving character having a signal transmitter structured to transmit an electronic signal indicating the identity of the roving character;

wherein said toy is carried by a person within the environment, and produces a notification in response to receiving an electronic signal from the roving character notifying the person that the roving character is nearby.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein the electronic signal is an infrared signal.

11. The method of claim 9 wherein the electronic signal is a radio frequency signal.

12. A method of personalizing a toy, comprising:

providing an interactive toy comprising a memory and further capable of producing speech for interaction with a user;

prompting the user to provide his or her name to the toy; and
storing the name in the toy's memory, wherein the toy uses the name stored in memory to refer to the user by name when interacting and producing speech.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein prompting occurs when the user receives the toy for the first time.

14. The method of claim 12 wherein the toy further comprises means for recording speech and the name is provided by speaking the name and is recognized and recorded by the toy.

15. The method of claim 12 wherein the name is provided by text input.

16. The method of claim 12 wherein the name is programmed into memory by transmitting a wireless signal comprising the name.

17. The method of claim 12 wherein the name is pre-stored in the memory of the toy.

18. The method of claim 12 wherein the toy is pre-ordered to contain pre-programmed personalized speech data.

19. An interactive toy comprising:
an wireless signal receiver for receiving a wireless signal from at least one of a plurality of wireless signal transmitters located within a surrounding environment, the wireless signal representing the identity of a location, object, or character within the surrounding environment;
a memory pre-programmed with data related to location, object, or character;
an event memory, said event memory used to store data comprised in the signals received; and

a electronic system for relating the data found in the event memory to the memory and for recalling/reminding the owner of the interactive character of past experiences stored in said memory.

20. The interactive toy of claim 19 wherein the owner's name is stored in memory.

21. The interactive toy of claim 19 wherein the interactive toy addresses the owner using the name stored in memory.

22. The interactive toy of claim 19 wherein the receiver is an infrared receiver for receiving Infrared signals.

23. The interactive toy of claim 19 wherein the receiver is a radio frequency receiver for receiving radio frequency signals.

24. The interactive toy of claim 19 wherein each location, object, or character corresponds with a wireless signal transmitter.

25. The method of claim 1 wherein the notifying comprises producing speech.

26. The method of claim 1 wherein the notifying comprises producing sound effects.

27. The method of claim 1 wherein the notifying comprises producing music.